

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously Presented) A knife section for mounting on a reciprocating sickle bar for a harvester and reciprocating during use across an edge of a stationary sickle guard, said knife section being flat and having a top surface plane and comprising a base with a laterally extending base edge, the knife section having a leading end spaced from the base edge, mounting holes in the base for securing the knife section to a sickle bar, the knife section having a central dividing plane perpendicular to the top surface plane of the knife section and bisecting the top surface plane between the base and leading end, and the base having side edges parallel to the central dividing plane, the side edges of the base having a length of between 40% and 50% of a distance from the base edge to the leading end, the leading end being of substantially less lateral width perpendicularly to the center dividing plane than a width between the side edges of the base, as defined by the base edge, a pair of cutting edges, one on each side of the knife section and each cutting edge defining a cutting line that continually moves away from the center plane of the knife section from a first end of such cutting line adjacent the leading end to a second end of the cutting line at a junction of the cutting line with a respective side edge on the respective side of the base of the knife section, and each cutting line being concave with respect to a straight line between the first and second ends of the respective cutting line being about 14% of the length of the straight line, such that the opening between adjacent knife sections placed edge to edge on a sickle bar results in increased feed area for crop material that is cut with each reciprocation of the knife section when installed on a sickle bar.

2. (Original) The knife section of claim 1, wherein said leading end has a surface transverse to the central plane of the knife section.

3. (cancelled)

4 (Previously Presented) The knife section of claim 1, wherein said cutting line is part of a circle and the line moves away from the center plane at a substantially greater rate for each increment of distance in direction from the leading end to the base along the cutting plane adjacent to the base than at the leading end.

5. (Previously Presented) The knife section of claim 1, wherein each cutting edge is serrated, with outer serration points lying along the respective cutting line.

6 – 15 (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A knife section for mounting on a reciprocating sickle bar for a harvester and reciprocating during use across an edge of a stationary sickle guard, the knife section comprising:

- a substantially flat top surface;

- a substantially flat bottom surface being substantially parallel to the substantially flat top surface;

- a base edge;

- a leading end opposite the base edge;

- a left side edge extending from the base edge about one half of a distance between the base edge and the leading end;

- a right side edge extending from an opposite side of the base edge about one half of the distance between the base edge and the leading end;

- an arcuate left cutting edge extending between the left side edge and the leading end, wherein the left cutting edge comprises a left serrated cutting edge; and

- an arcuate right cutting edge extending between the right edge and the leading end, wherein the right cutting edge comprises a right serrated cutting edge and wherein a distance between the left cutting edge and the right cutting edge continually increases from the leading end to the left and right side

edges, wherein the arcuate cutting edges are of a configuration that defines a portion of a substantially elliptical cutting edge when a left side edge of one knife section is positioned substantially adjacent to a right side edge of another knife sectionedge.